

§ 2542.220

(4) Commission of any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or business honesty that seriously and directly affects the present responsibility of a person.

(b) Violation of the terms of a public agreement or transaction so serious as to affect the integrity of an agency program, such as:

(1) A willful failure to perform in accordance with the terms of one or more public agreements or transactions;

(2) A history of failure to perform or of unsatisfactory performance of one or more public agreements or transactions; or

(3) A willful violation of a statutory or regulatory provision or requirement applicable to a public agreement or transaction.

(c) Any of the following causes:

(1) A nonprocurement debarment by any Federal agency taken before October 1, 1988, the effective date of the Governmentwide debarment and suspension (nonprocurement) regulations, or a procurement debarment by any Federal agency taken pursuant to 48 CFR part 9, subpart 9.4;

(2) Knowingly doing business with a debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded person, in connection with a covered transaction, except as permitted in § 2542.130 or § 2542.140;

(3) Failure to pay a single substantial debt, or a number of outstanding debts (including disallowed costs and overpayments, but not including sums owed the Federal Government under the Internal Revenue Code) owed to any Federal agency or instrumentality, provided the debt is uncontested by the debtor or, if contested, provided that the debtor's legal and administrative remedies have been exhausted;

(4) Violation of a material provision of a voluntary exclusion agreement entered into under § 2542.270 or of any settlement of a debarment or suspension action; or

(5) Violation of any requirement of subpart F of this part, relating to providing a drug-free workplace, as set forth in § 2542.530 of this part.

(d) Any other cause of so serious or compelling a nature that it affects the present responsibility of a person.

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§ 2542.220 Procedures.

The Corporation shall process debarment actions as informally as practicable, consistent with the principles of fundamental fairness, using the procedures in §§ 2542.230 through 2542.260.

§ 2542.230 Investigation and referral.

Information concerning the existence of a cause for debarment from any source shall be promptly reported, investigated, and referred, when appropriate, to the debarring official for consideration. After consideration, the debarring official may issue a notice of proposed debarment.

§ 2542.240 Notice of proposed debarment.

A debarment proceeding shall be initiated by notice to the respondent advising:

(a) That debarment is being considered;

(b) Of the reasons for the proposed debarment in terms sufficient to put the respondent on notice of the conduct or transaction(s) upon which it is based;

(c) Of the cause(s) relied upon under § 2542.210 for proposing debarment;

(d) Of the provisions of §§ 2542.230 through 2542.260, and any other Corporation procedures, if applicable, governing debarment decision making; and

(e) Of the potential effect of a debarment.

§ 2542.250 Opportunity to contest proposed debarment.

(a) *Submission in opposition.* Within 30 days after receipt of the notice of proposed debarment, the respondent may submit, in person, in writing, or through a representative, information and argument in opposition to the proposed debarment.

(b) *Additional proceedings as to disputed material facts.* (1) In actions not based upon a conviction or civil judgment, if the debarring official finds that the respondent's submission in opposition raises a genuine dispute over facts material to the proposed debarment, respondent(s) shall be afforded an opportunity to appear with a representative, submit documentary evidence, present witnesses, and confront any witness the agency presents.

(2) A transcribed record of any additional proceedings shall be made available at cost to the respondent, upon request, unless the respondent and the agency, by mutual agreement, waive the requirement for a transcript.

§ 2542.260 Debarring official's decision.

(a) *No additional proceedings necessary.* In actions based upon a conviction or civil judgment, or in which there is no genuine dispute over material facts, the debarring official shall make a decision on the basis of all the information in the administrative record, including any submission made by the respondent. The decision shall be made within 45 days after receipt of any information and argument submitted by the respondent, unless the debarring official extends this period for good cause.

(b) *Additional proceedings necessary.* (1) In actions in which additional proceedings are necessary to determine disputed material facts, written findings of fact shall be prepared. The debarring official shall base the decision on the facts as found, together with any information and argument submitted by the respondent and any other information in the administrative record.

(2) The debarring official may refer disputed material facts to another official for findings of fact. The debarring official may reject any such findings, in whole or in part, only after specifically determining them to be arbitrary and capricious or clearly erroneous.

(3) The debarring official's decision shall be made after the conclusion of the proceedings with respect to disputed facts.

(c) (1) *Standard of proof.* In any debarment action, the cause for debarment must be established by a preponderance of the evidence. Where the proposed debarment is based upon a conviction or civil judgment, the standard shall be deemed to have been met.

(2) *Burden of proof.* The burden of proof is on the agency proposing debarment.

(d) *Notice of debarring official's decision.* (1) If the debarring official decides to impose debarment, the respondent shall be given prompt notice:

(i) Referring to the notice of proposed debarment;

(ii) Specifying the reasons for debarment;

(iii) Stating the period of debarment, including effective dates; and

(iv) Advising that the debarment is effective for covered transactions throughout the executive branch of the Federal Government unless an agency head or an authorized designee makes the determination referred to in § 2542.130.

(2) If the debarring official decides not to impose debarment, the respondent shall be given prompt notice of that decision. A decision not to impose debarment shall be without prejudice to a subsequent imposition of debarment by any other agency.

§ 2542.270 Settlement and voluntary exclusion.

(a) When in the best interest of the Government, the Corporation may, at any time, settle a debarment or suspension action.

(b) If a participant and the agency agree to a voluntary exclusion of the participant, such voluntary exclusion shall be entered on the Nonprocurement List (see subpart E of this part).

§ 2542.280 Period of debarment.

(a) Debarment shall be for a period commensurate with the seriousness of the cause(s). If a suspension precedes a debarment, the suspension period shall be considered in determining the debarment period.

(1) Debarment for causes other than those related to a violation of the requirements of subpart F of this part generally should not exceed three years. Where circumstances warrant, a longer period of debarment may be imposed.

(2) In the case of a debarment for a violation of the requirements of subpart F of this part (see § 2542.210(c)(5)), the period of debarment shall not exceed five years.

(b) The debarring official may extend an existing debarment for an additional period, if that official determines that an extension is necessary to protect the public interest. However, a debarment may not be extended solely